



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS**  
*COMISIÓN DE ASUNTOS HISPANOS*

*Leo Gaeta,*  
Chair

June 9, 2004

*Yvonne*  
*Lopez-Morton,*  
Vice Chair

Fred Stephens  
Director

*Diana Avalos,*  
Executive Committee

Department of Licensing  
PO Box 9020  
Olympia, WA 98507-9020

*Homero Tamez,*  
Executive Committee

*Gabriel Banfi*

Dear Fred:

*Faviola Barbosa*

*Karla Padilla-Reyna*

*Gabriel Portugal*

*Rebecca Villareal*

Thank you for contacting the Commission on Hispanic Affairs regarding the Department of Licensing's efforts to verify Social Security numbers for persons with drivers' licenses issued in Washington. Your engagement of the Commission on an issue that will likely affect a number of Latinos in the state shows your concern for the community, and we appreciate your efforts.

*Uriel Iñiguez,*  
Acting Executive  
Director

As we both know, DOL requests a Social Security number from drivers' license applicants not for immigration purposes, but as a requirement under a federal law for child support enforcement. Persons without SSNs can complete an affidavit stating that they are not eligible for an SSN and still receive a license.

When persons without legal status apply for drivers' licenses, they may likely be intimidated by the request for an SSN. They may have not been given the option to submit an affidavit instead of the SSN, or they may have not been assured that such an affidavit is not shared with federal immigration authorities. In response to these fears, applicants may have felt no other choice but to submit an incorrect SSN. With DOL's new policy of reviewing these SSNs for accuracy, these applicants are now likely to receive a letter from DOL giving them a limited amount of time to correct their number, complete an affidavit, or forfeit their license.

Our concern at the Commission is that the message may not be clear that such a correspondence from DOL is not related to immigration status (as it is not), and that such information would not be in any way shared with immigration authorities (as it will not). Without a clear message to this effect, these drivers will potentially simply let their licenses lapse. Knowing DOL's dedication to the safety of all drivers in Washington, we venture to guess that this is not the response DOL is seeking.

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[www.cha.wa.gov](http://www.cha.wa.gov) [hispanic@cha.wa.gov](mailto:hispanic@cha.wa.gov)

We therefore strongly request that your communications to licensed drivers in WA regarding potential Social Security number inaccuracies be clear as to their purpose, clearly state that such information is confidential and not shared with immigration authorities, and is provided in Spanish as well. Though this translation may add a small cost to your effort, it will provide greater returns in delivering your message to the Latino residents of the state.

We very much appreciate your time in reviewing this correspondence. We hope you can reply to our request, and we are available to discuss this matter further at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Uriel Iñiguez  
Acting Executive Director

cc: Denise Movius